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Billions to Produce Missiles, But What About Brains?

If this were a sane and sensible capital, it would be devoting at least as much attention to the deficiencies of our schools as to the lag in our missiles program. The missiles we turn out now will admittedly be obsolete in a few years but the schools will determine the kinds of minds which will be operating in our country a generation hence. Yet there are no glamorous investigations on Capitol Hill dealing with schools and the warning signals go unheeded. No one issues subpoenas for the officials responsible for that report on Soviet education whose vital omissions we revealed in our issue of November 18. The story broke into the press several days later when the original author of the report, Mrs. Eleanor S. Lowman, sent out a letter protesting the way in which it had been mishandled. Even then the *New York Times* story (Nov. 21) managed—as did the report when released—to omit the two features of the Soviet system which most need to be imitated if we are to correct our own deficiencies: the higher salaries for teachers and the fact that Soviet higher education is not only free but most students are paid while they go to college. These persistent omissions are the Freudian slips of a society ready to spend billions on missiles but not on schools.

Business Handouts Inadequate

The archetype of this mentality was evident when former President Hoover spoke to the United Engineering Societies in New York. The nearest he allowed himself to come to the crux of our educational problem was when he said cautiously, "We are also told that the cost of training in our universities and technical schools has risen beyond the reach of sufficient numbers for the national supply. That is also true, and industry is striving generously to remedy the situation." These are the deceptions fostered by the U. S. Chamber of Commerce. The President's Committee on Education Beyond the High School reported last July that the differential between college teacher salaries and comparable levels in industry represented an \$800,000,000 a year hidden faculty subsidy to higher education—eight times as large as the \$100,000,000 a year received in gifts from corporations. The dimensions of our educational problem are so large they can only be solved by the Federal government. But solution continues to be blocked by the Administration's insistence that education is primarily a local and State matter, and that the universities should look to big business for handouts.

If America a half century hence is not to fall back technologically in peaceful competition with the Soviet bloc, major steps must be taken now. The three main weakpoints are the teacher shortage, the rural schools and the growing cost of a higher education. A year ago the National Education Asso-

ciation estimated a shortage of 122,000 teachers and reported that 840,000 school children are being deprived of full-time instruction due to the shortage of teachers and classrooms. The South and the rural areas generally, particularly underprivileged minorities like the Negroes and the Mexican Americans, represent human wastelands where much talent is lost forever. A recent study showed that half our high schools have less than seven teachers, and more than half do not offer courses in physics and chemistry. A Joint Congressional Atomic Energy subcommittee last March estimated that 80 percent of the U. S. potential in scientists and engineers was never realized because of inadequate high school preparation and lack of facilities.

Not the Amount, But Supply and Demand

The Soviet education report shows that when the U.S.S.R. wants more teachers or technicians, it solves the problem not by compulsion (as we are led to imagine) but in the old-fashioned supply-and-demand way by offering higher student stipends and wages. This is the solution to our No. 1 problem—the teacher shortage. Whereas the average number of elementary-secondary pupils per teacher in the Soviet Union has fallen from 33.1 in 1927-28 to 17.1 in 1955-56, the average here is 26.9 per teacher. It was a vivid commentary on the causes of this to read in last Sunday's Hearst press (Nov. 24), "Recent aircraft plant cutbacks in the Los Angeles area eased the local teacher shortage. Teachers came back to school from better paying factory jobs."

The Federal government ought to begin spending at least as much on schools as it is spending on missiles, that is about three billion a year. But only the military, in the name of defense, and in the pursuit of new methods of vaster destruction and swifter annihilation seem to command the power to obtain such sums from Congress. A cynic might be led to conclude that our educational problem can only be solved if we hand the schools over to the Pentagon and let the output of scientists and engineers be handled on contract (preferably cost plus) with private industry. If there were a General Dynamics, a Boeing, a Curtiss-Wright, in education, their men would be lining up Senators and Congressmen for higher appropriations. There would be a Symington and a Jackson constantly harrying the Defense Department to spend more on education. There would be investigations and exposures. Great corporations, operating verticle trusts from the kindergarten to the graduate school, would be combing backward areas for human raw material and the professor would attain new eminence once dividends were dependent on him. A school lobby like our aviation lobby could make us a race of intellectual giants in a generation.

The Perfect Scientist to Fit the Pentagon's Preconceptions

"The Father of The H-Bomb" Opens the Johnson Hearings

The Johnson hearings promise only to deepen the national confusion. This is an investigation which starts with the very assumptions which need to be investigated. The assumptions are that the answer to Sputnik and the Soviet ICBM is to develop swifter and more destructive weapons of our own; that the path to peace lies in stepping up world tension with a swifter arms race and a tighter noose of bases around the Soviet Union; and that a sane world can somehow be maintained by diverting an ever greater share of national resources into new electronic monsters of destruction.

The first witness was well chosen to reinforce these assumptions. To be known as "the father of the H-bomb" seems to us as horrible as to be known as "the mother of mustard gas" or "the inventor of the crematorium" except that the H-bomb will destroy, cremate and torture on a far greater scale. Dr. Teller does not seem to mind his soubriquet. He is a model of the kind of scientists we really like, men who combine great technical genius with the same amorality as our military and the same cold war stereotypes as our politicians.

More Primitive Than Sage

The wise man might ask himself, "Why do men hate? Why do they fight? Why are they impelled to kill each other? How can we straighten out their natures? How can we find the ultimate weapon against the ultimate enemy—the enemy which lurks in each man's heart, the hatred of his brother?"

But this Dr. Teller is no sage. He is half scientist, half primitive, fabricating more ingenious clubs to carry on the old interminable warfare. In his thick, almost incomprehensible Hungarian German accent, he held the Johnson committee respectfully entranced—the perfect witness for its purposes, challenging none of its own thoughtless preconceptions. *Spend more to kill more* was his message as it is the committee's approach.

Unthinking wickedness was implicit in what Dr. Teller had to tell the Committee as in what he told Ed Murrow the day before on See It Now. To speak of Sputnik as a "Pearl Harbor," to say that the emergency is greater than World War II, is the worst kind of nonsense, to condition the public mind for the war we ought all to be trying to avoid.

Pearl Harbor was an attack. We have not been attacked. World War II was the greatest contest in slaughter the world has yet known. We are not at war. Until there has been an

Slight Confession

"Air Force officials say, however, that while it would be desirable to build the Warren ICBM base underground, it was difficult to justify the increased cost at this time under the tight budget, particularly since there is no exact knowledge now of just how such a base should be built."

—*Washington Post*, Nov. 23, "Costs Force Shift in Plan to Put First ICBM Base Underground."

attack, until there is war, there is always a chance to avoid it, if we wish to, and it is the possibility of avoiding war and the unparalleled horror of the next war which need to be emphasized.

Basic Problem Not Technological

The basic problems in avoiding that war are not scientific nor technological. They are political and diplomatic and ethical. What George F. Kennan had to say in the third of his BBC lectures in England makes more sense that all the discussion here like Dr. Teller's—for the latter, after all, is not much more than the beating of tom toms.

The first step, as Kennan advocates it, is to separate the two main contenders, to disengage them, to put a space between them, to let humanity breathe again. Mutual withdrawal, neutralization of Germany, this is the path toward the liberation of Europe from our recklessness and Soviet rigidity.

The belief in the efficacy of mutual terror is coming apart at the seams. Krushchev thinks communism would survive a new war and Dr. Teller, as is clear from the box below, thinks capitalism could survive. Both sides are drifting into an attitude of mind which accepts the possibility of war, begins to think it inevitable.

Those who read Dr. Teller's testimony will see for themselves the questions the Committee failed to ask. What happens to the rest of mankind as poisonous clouds of fallout circle the globe? What will happen to the lands in between as the two monster powers fight? How do we organize food supply, life itself, with cities crippled perhaps forever, without phones, trains, gasoline, fuel, and millions dying?

We have assumed that only a madman would start a thermonuclear war. But history warns us there have been such madmen. Indeed the Teller testimony shows we have them among us.

Nothing Like A Scientist for Balanced and Humane Views

Or How to Kill About 200 Million People While We Only Lose 100 Million

"Of course, immediately below a powerful bomb or in the immediate neighborhood of a bomb, you may find there is not very much you can do unless you go to really terrific expense. . . . Most of the damage of the bomb . . . is done by the fire storm . . . this fire storm is likely to claim more victims than anything else . . . how to get a system of shelters which can withstand the fire storm where people can go and stay for the hours while this fire storm is raging, and be supplied with the necessities including air [is difficult]. . . .

"We have great stores of food supplies which we consider a nuisance. In time of war these food supplies . . .

may be a life-saver . . . take this food supply and distribute it in such a way that it should be safe from fall-out, out of the range of immediate probable targets. . . . A country where the masses are starving, as Russia, I think will be in a very difficult position to match us along this purely defensive line. . . .

"We might be able within a few years to put ourselves into a position where the Russians can hit us badly but not so badly but that we can recover, and at the same time we shall be able to retaliate in such a way that they won't be able to recover."

—*Dr. Edward Teller, at the Johnson Committee Hearings.*

While the Soviet Bloc Drifts Back Toward Stalinism, We Move Further from McCarthyism

Supreme Court Agrees to Hear Passport Appeals; Dr. Otto Nathan Acquitted

In one important respect at least the United States is doing better than the Soviet bloc. The "thaw" in the civil liberties field is proceeding here but freezing up there. The resignation of some of Poland's leading writers from her Communist party in protest against dwindling liberties of expression, the savage sentences imposed in Hungary on some of her foremost writers, and the Stalin-like way Krushchev has begun to lecture the writers of the Soviet Union are foreboding. While they move back toward the standards of Stalinism, we at least can boast of a steady movement away from McCarthyism.

The most important news in this area on our side is the Supreme Court's agreement to hear the Rockwell Kent and Dr. Walter Briehl passport appeals. This will be the first time the Court has passed on the political restrictions which the State Department since World War II has begun to impose on travel abroad.

In neither case did the State Department ever allege reason to believe the applicant was going abroad for any improper purpose. Rockwell Kent, the famous artist, asked for a passport to paint abroad. Dr. Walter Briehl, a well known Los Angeles psychiatrist, was given a passport in 1953 to attend a mental health congress; two years later, when he applied for renewal to attend similar meetings in Geneva and Istanbul, his application was rejected. Both men refused to sign non-Communist affidavits.

Is the Dept. Above the Law?

One of the questions raised in the appeal is whether the State Department can go on ignoring the decisions of lower courts. The Court of Appeals, in the Dr. Otto Nathan case in 1955, and on five other occasions since, has directed the Department to grant quasi-judicial hearings to passport applicants but to no avail.

"The 'hearings' afforded under the regulations," says the petition to the Supreme Court, "are still based upon unsworn broad 'allegations' which the Secretary recites without adopting. His agents produce no evidence against the applicant but choose instead to examine him under oath as to his political associations and opinions. The decision of the Passport Office is based upon secret reports which, in turn, are based upon secret informants, of whose name and veracity the Department often has no knowledge."

A Defeat for Chairman Walter

In this connection it is a pleasure to record the directed acquittal of Dr. Otto Nathan whom Chairman Walter of the House Committee set out to punish for his temerity in winning a passport from the State Department. Dr. Nathan, who is Einstein's executor, refused on principle to say whether he was a Communist or whether the non-Communist passport affidavit he filed with State Department was truthful.

Dr. Nathan was convicted of contempt on April 30 last. But on June 17 the Supreme Court handed down its historic decision in the Watkins case which cuts the ground from under the Walter committee. His lawyers petitioned the District Court to reverse that conviction in the light of the Watkins decision and Federal Judge Edward M. Curran did

Recommended

Howard Fast's *The Naked God*: a picture, drawn in agony of the American Communist party as seen from the inside, by its once leading writer, disillusioned by Krushchev, disappointed by the failure of internal reform, and sick at heart as he finally realized what writers were up against in the Soviet bloc where the penalties are more severe. A useful reminder to progressives that while it is essential to defend the rights of Communists it is also important to prevent them from again occupying a position of leadership in the American Left. "Whatever the Communist party once was," Fast concludes, "today it is a prison for man's best and boldest dreams. Tomorrow belongs to those who break down the prison walls that enclose the minds of men, not to those who support such walls."

so, though—as he said—"reluctantly." This was the first reversal of its kind by a District Judge but it will not be the last.

The Lamont Case

Restrictions on travel are dying out with the House Committee. The State Department is trying its best to keep it a secret but in at least one case—that of a Quaker and his family bound for India—it backed down when a passport applicant refused to sign a non-Communist affidavit. This is one of the reasons for the petition filed here last week by Corliss Lamont through his attorneys, Leonard Boudin and Harry Rand, asking the Federal court's permission to take a deposition from Secretary Dulles and his chief passport official, Miss Frances Knight.

Lamont, who is challenging the non-Communist affidavit requirements, wants to ask Mr. Dulles and Miss Knight (1) whether they have given others a passport without requiring the affidavit and (2) whether they have any information which would give them a basis even by their own regulations to bar Lamont from travel abroad.

Tom Clark on the Distastefulness of Informing

Another sign of the lightening political atmosphere was the Supreme Court's decision last Monday in the Yates case. Oleta O'Connor Yates, a California Communist official, was found guilty of contempt and sentenced to a year in jail on eleven counts for refusing to inform on others during her Smith Act trial in 1952. The Court split. Douglas, Warren and Black dissented on the ground that her imprisonment for 70 days during the trial for civil contempt made it improper also to punish her for criminal contempt and to treat each refusal to inform as a separate count.

The majority, speaking through Mr. Justice Tom Clark, agreed that each refusal could not be treated as a separate contempt but upheld the criminal conviction. However, the majority regarded the sentence as too severe and remanded for resentencing by the trial judge "in the cool reflection of subsequent events." It is worth noting that the majority spoke of her "understandable reluctance to be an informer" as a factor to be taken into account in reducing her sentence, though "legally insufficient" for its reversal. Coming from the pen of Tom Clark, this is indicative and memorable.

Neglected Text: The Indonesian Ambassador Wonders Why We Are So Panicky Over Sputnik

An Asian Views the Forthcoming NATO Meeting in Paris With Dismay

This is an abridged text of a speech the Indonesian Ambassador delivered in Washington Nov. 21 to the Conference on American Library Resources in Southern Asia. It received scant attention in our cold war press.

"Asians are somewhat confused when they observe that the knowledge of the atom becomes not a matter for scientific exchange among the nations of the world, not for raising the standard of living, nor developing the mental resources of the world, but instead is devoted almost exclusively to the service of destruction.

"Observe what has occurred within the month. It is appalling that the moon has lost its romantic status and instead has become a way station in man's headlong and senseless rush to annihilate himself. Is world leadership to come from a civilization which views the moon as a prize of war to be used as a platform for unleashing more pestilence on the world?

Almost In Panic

"Within the past month I have been asked repeatedly, 'What is the effect of Sputnik on the people of Indonesia? Will this give the Asian people a feeling that the Soviet Union is a greater military power, with the result that Asian statesmen will be more influenced by Russian policy?' Behind these questions is a fear, almost a panic, on the part of some Americans that the recent show of military might will have a serious effect on Indonesian statesman.

"Could it be that those who ask the question about the effect of these technological revolutions on the Asian viewpoint rely on a militaristic and materialistic narrowness? When atomic energy was discovered, my countrymen did not view it as poised military airplanes, bristling statesmen, and mutual distrust among nations.

A Potential Blessing

"To us it meant a source of power, vital to the welfare of an underdeveloped country struggling to overcome the imbalance of a colonial economy. To us it meant electricity in the far reaches of our islands, where families still live by candlelight. To us it meant overcoming a negative food bal-

I. F. Stone Speaking in Calif.

San Francisco: Fri. Dec. 13, First Unitarian Church, auspices, I. F. Stone's Weekly.

Los Angeles: Tues. Dec. 17, Music Box Theatre, 7080 Hollywood Blvd., auspices Women for Legislative Action.

Subject: The Real Challenge of Sputnik. \$1.

ance, and it meant bringing health to a country whose death rate under colonial rule was the highest in the world.

"We see now that the announcement by the Soviet Union of their launching of their earth satellite—Sputnik—causes consternation and apprehension among the Western nations and the leaders of the Western Powers are to go to Paris for the North Atlantic Treaty Organization meeting.

"But it seems that they are attempting to meet this fresh technological challenge through better military preparedness. It is this military approach designed to reestablish international prestige that terrifies the people of Asia. Even the term 'crash program' has an ominous sound to my countrymen. I believe that most of the people of the world have confidence in the advancement of science and technology in the United States and her ability to meet this challenge, without overemphasizing the military aspects of such a challenge.

Needed: A Crash Program for Peace

"May I suggest that what the world needs is a 'crash program' for peace. Why is it not possible for the leaders of nations to accept a more philosophical and spiritual approach to this new scientific achievement? I suggest a conference of the leaders of the world today. At this meeting should be President Eisenhower, Mr. Krushchev, Prime Minister Nehru and President Sukarno, as well as the great spiritual and religious leaders of the world.

"We accept the fact nowadays that there are nations having different points of view and ideologies on many subjects. But it is becoming increasingly apparent that, in order to prevent the annihilation of mankind, such nations must find some formula for co-existence."

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